

The co-operative movement in Maleny, Queensland.

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Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd

Introduction

To the Presenter:

- a resident of Maleny (Sunshine Coast of Qld) for 33 years
- inspired in 1978 to begin first of “new wave” cooperatives in Maleny
- has been a member, a manager, a worker, a book-keeper, a secretary, and a director in cooperatives

To the Presentation:

- the concept of new economic thinking
- short “story” of the history of cooperation in Maleny
- Maleny coops and the “triple bottom line”
- the current profile of cooperatives in Australia
- the potential for cooperatives to be leaders in the 21st Century

The New Economic Thinking

“Old-think” – *The bottom line is all that really counts in a business!*

The “bottom line” has certainly got to “stack up” but

“New-think” – *The environmental and social costs (and benefits) are equally as important as the “purely economic” bottom line.....*

Hence: The “Triple Bottom Line”

Consisting of:

Environmental, Economic and Social aspects of a business's performance.

Cooperation in Maleny

- Early days – old dairy cooperative and Butter Factory (late 1800's and early 1900's);
- Kindergarten construction (1939);
- “New wave” of cooperatives and cooperative community organisations (1979 to the future).

Coops and Cooperative Community Organisations in Maleny (1)

Name Of Organisation	Year Started	Type Of Organisation
Maple Street Coop	1979	Consumer cooperative
Maleny Credit Union	1984	Financial cooperative
Crystal Waters Coop	1986	Com. settlement coop
LETSystem	1987	Alternative trading
Wastebusters Coop	1989	Recycling coop
Mountain Fare Coop	1989	Women's coop
Barung Landcare	1991	Environment assoc.
MENA Inc.	1991	Eco devpt assoc.
Cedarton Foresters Coop	1991	Com. settlement coop
Manduka Cooperative	1991	Com. settlement coop
Ananda Marga River School	1992	Educational institution

Coops and Cooperative Community Organisations in Maleny (2)

Name Of Organisation	Year Started	Type Of Organisation
Black Possum Coop	1992	Publishing cooperative
Peace of Green	1992	Arts/craft collective
Maleny Film Society Inc	1993	Film club
Waroo Arts Coop	1994	Performance cooperative
Maleny Coop Club	1994	Licensed club
Green Hills Inc.	1995	Environ/planning assoc.
Booroobin Valley Learning Centre	1995	Educational cooperative
LEED (Local Economic and Enterprise Devpt) Coop	1997	Economic Devpt coop
Neighbourhood Centre	1997	Social service assoc

coops and Cooperative Community Organisations in Maleny (3)

Name Of Organisation	Year Started	Type Of Organisation
FACE (Family and Community Empowerment)	1998	Family support services
YOGI (Young Organic Growers Group)	1999	Youth group
Hinterland FM Radio	2000	Community radio assoc
Maleny Com'ty Forum	2001	Forum for issues
Booroobin Bush Magic	2001	Workers' cooperative
MENA community portal & aggregated buying group	2001	Intra- and inter-regional networking and buying
Maleny Cultural Learning Exchange	2002	Cultural exchange group
Maleny Working Together	2003	Strategic planning project

Number of Jobs Created

Organisation	F/t Jobs	P/t Jobs	Total Jobs
Maple Street Cooperative	1	12	13
Maleny & District Community Credit Union	5	9	14
LETSsystem	-	6	6
Crystal Waters Cooperative	-	3	3
Maleny Enterprise Network Association	1	4	5
Barung Landcare	3	4	7
Ananda Marga River School	2	6	8
Peace of Green	-	23	23
Maleny Film Society	1	3	4
Green Hills Fund	-	2	2
Booroobin Valley Learning Centre	2	2	4
Maleny Cooperative Club	2	11	13
LEED Cooperative	-	5	5
Maleny Neighbourhood Centre	1	4	5
Booroobin Bush Magic Cooperative	1	6	7
MENA Community Portal etc.	1	5	6
Cultural Learning Exchange	2	2	4
TOTAL	22	107	129

Distributive and Non-distributive Coops

Distributive	Non-distributive
Maple Street Cooperative	Maleny and District Community Credit Union
Crystal Waters Cooperative	LETSsystem
Cedarton Foresters Cooperative	Mountain Fare Cooperative
Manduka Community Settlement Cooperative	Barung Landcare
Peace of Green	MENA Inc.
Booroobin Bush Magic	Ananda Marga River School
Maleny Community Portal and Aggregated Buying Group	Maleny Film Society
Maleny Cultural Learning Exchange	Maleny Cooperative Club
	Green Hills Fund
	Booroobin Valley Learning Centre
	LEED Cooperative
	Maleny Neighbourhood Centre Inc.
	Maleny Community Garden

Goals of Distributive Coops

Distributive	Goals
Maple Street Coop	Economic; Environmental; Social (health)
Crystal Waters Cooperative	Economic; Environmental; Social (& cultural)
Cedarton Foresters Cooperative	Environmental; social
Manduka Community Settlement Cooperative	Environmental; social
Peace of Green	Economic
Booroobin Bush Magic	Economic; Environmental
Maleny Community Portal and Aggregated Buying Group	Economic
Maleny Cultural Learning Exchange	Social (and cultural)

Goals of Non-distributive Coops

Non-distributive	Goals
Maleny and District Community Credit Union	Economic; Environmental; Social
LETSystem	Economic; Social
Mountain Fare Cooperative	Economic; Environmental; Social
Barung Landcare	Environmental; Economic
MENA Inc.	Economic
Ananda Marga River School	Social; Environmental
Maleny Film Society	Social (& cultural)
Maleny Cooperative Club	Social (& cultural)
Green Hills Fund	Environmental;
Booroobin Valley Learning Centre	Social (& cultural); Environmental
LEED Cooperative	Economic
Maleny Neighbourhood Centre Inc.	Social
Maleny Community Garden	Social; Environmental; Economic

Economic Benefits Provided by the Coops in Maleny

- Increased range of goods and services;
- Increased employment;
- Increase in skills (both technical, and inter-personal);
- Access to capital and other resources;
- Capacity for young people to remain in their community and access employment.

Social Benefits Provided by the Coops in Maleny

- Increased self-esteem (through inclusion and skill-building);
- Increased social contact and opportunities for participation;
- Unlocking potential in previously disempowered community members;

- Increased sense of community ownership;
- Increased “cooperative culture”, and ability to work together.

Environmental Benefits Provided by the Coops in Maleny

- Some (such as Barung and Green Hills) have solely environmental aims;
- Others (such as the Credit Union; Coop Club and Crystal Waters) conduct environmental audits along with their statutory audits;
- Practices such as buying (and selling) organic; re-using and recycling; minimising paper waste; paying an “eco-tax” are common.

How the Cooperatives Work Together

- Buying from and selling to each other;
- Cross memberships (therefore cross-fertilisation of new ideas);
- Some common directors/ management members (cross fertilisation of cooperative knowledge);
- Financial benefits (eg. Credit Union provides cheaper loans to coops etc.);
- Cross promotion (joint magazine, as well as newsletters for individual organisations);
- Cooperative Development Centre concept.

The challenge for cooperatives in the 21st century

To become entities that are known for their relevance (Currently they are little known, and even less understood – by lawyers; solicitors; accountants; Bankers; and the government)

How can they do this?

By becoming “leading edge” organisations in adopting “triple bottom line” accounting principles and practices.